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(54) Title: PREPARATION OF WORT AND BEER OF HIGH NUTRITIONAL VALUE, AND CORRESPONDING PRODUCTS		
(57) Abstract <p>In a process for the production of a cereal beer made from a cereal or mixture of cereals an aqueous cereal slurry is prepared from wet milled rolled or crushed cereal, heat treated cereal flour, and their mixtures. The slurry is malted at a temperature above 50 °C in the presence of starch degrading enzymes and, optionally, protein degrading enzymes. Degradation of soluble β-glucan is avoided by controlling β-glucanase activity. Upon cooling insoluble material is removed to form a cereal wort which is boiled with hops to destroy any β-glucanase activity. Substantial amounts of boiled traditional wort may be added during the process. Fermentation of the wort produces a beer containing a high amount of soluble β-glucan. Also disclosed are products prepared by the process.</p>		

WO 00/24864

PCT/SE99/01914

PREPARATION OF WORT AND BEER OF HIGH NUTRITIONAL VALUE, AND CORRESPONDING PRODUCTS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention relates to a process for the preparation of a beer of high nutritional value from cereals, in particular from oats, barley, and their mixtures, and to corresponding products, in particular wort and beer of high
10 nutritional value made from oats, barley, and their mixtures.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Water soluble native β -glucan is of major nutritional
15 interest. It is the chemical constituent of 'soluble dietary fiber', SDF, considered to be responsible for the association between oats products and reduced risk for coronary heart disease. In this context the term 'native' indicates that the carbohydrate has not been degraded enzymatically to a
20 substantial extent during its isolation. A variety of health food products rich in SDF are currently on the market.

Oats is particularly rich in SDF. Oats SDF is documented as being particularly healthy. But also barley and other cereals
25 contain SDF.

Conventional malting favors the presence of β -glucanase activity which either develops during the malting process or is caused by the addition of β -glucanase to the mash in order
30 to facilitate filtration of the beer. Degradation of soluble β -glucan by β -glucanase results in loss of nutritional value.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

It is an object of the present invention to provide a process for the production of a beer of high nutritional value from
5 cereals, in particular from oats, barley, and their mixtures.

It is another object of the invention to provide corresponding products, in particular high nutritional value wort and beer made from oats, barley, and their mixtures. 'High nutritional
10 value' refers to a high content of soluble β -glucan obtained by preservation of a substantial portion of the soluble β -glucan contained in the raw material.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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The invention is based on the insight that conventional malting should be avoided when producing a cereal wort, in particular an oats or barley wort or a mixed oats/barley wort, having a high content of soluble β -glucan. Avoidance of
20 conventional malting prevents β -glucan degrading β -glucanase from being formed. In the brewing process of the invention the malting step is substantially modified. Instead of being produced or activated in a malting step, enzymes required for degrading starch and, optionally, protein, are added prior to
25 or/and during the mashing step, imitating conventional malting but avoiding β -glucan degradation. The enzymes may be added in pure form but also in form of cereal derived materials containing substantial amounts of carbohydrates in addition to or instead of said enzymes.

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'Conventional malting' is defined as process of germinating a steeped cereal under controlled temperature conditions (about 15°C and 100% relative humidity) for a couple of days to make the corn produce starch and protein metabolizing

enzymes; germination is stopped by gentle heating (kilning) under a flow of dry air to reduce humidity, whereupon the rootlets formed in the process are removed.

- 5 Modification of conventional malting according to the invention may consist in the complete omission of the germination step or in a substantial reduction thereof, providing incompletely germinated grain. The activation of various carbohydrate degrading enzymes does not proceed at the
- 10 same rate from the start of germination. In particular, the rate of activation of amylolytic enzymes, such as α -amylase, develops substantially faster than that of β -glucanase. This allows to carry germination to a point at which substantial amylolytic activity has developed in the corn while β -
- 15 glucanase activity is still insignificant or even cannot be detected at all. This optimum point, which is dependent on the cereal variety employed, germination temperature and humidity, etc., can be determined by monitoring the activity of the respective enzyme. The length of the germination phase thus
- 20 should be selected to provide a partially germinated oats, barley or other cereal grain having substantial amylolytic activity while essentially lacking β -glucanase activity. 'Essentially lacking β -glucanase activity' signifies a degree activity which does not decrease the yield of soluble β -glucan
- 25 by more than 20% by weight, more preferred 10% by weight, compared to the yield obtained from the corresponding source of non-germinated corn.

- The modified malting process according to the invention
- 30 comprising controlled malting and, optionally, selective enzyme inactivation, is useful in the production of cereal wort and cereal beer containing substantial amounts of soluble β -glucan while avoiding undesirable β -glucan degradation. The present invention also comprises a process for producing wort

and beer rich in soluble β -glucan complying with regulatory requirements in various countries, such as the German 'purity law'.

- 5 According to the invention is disclosed a process for producing, from a cereal or mixture of cereals, in particular from one or several of rolled oats, rolled barley, oats flour, barley flour, fractions of such flours rich in β -glucan, incompletely germinated oats, and incompletely germinated
10 barley, a cereal wort or beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan, in particular an oats, barley or mixed oats/barley wort or beer.

The process of the invention for the production of a beer of
15 the aforementioned kind, comprises the following steps:

- forming an aqueous cereal slurry containing from 10% to 30%, preferably from 15% to 25% by weight of a wet milled cereal or a mixture of wet milled cereals, such as rolled oats, rolled barley, heat treated oats flour, heat treated
20 barley flour, incompletely germinated oats, incompletely germinated barley, and their mixtures;
- mashing the slurry at a temperature above 50°C, preferably of 54-65°C, most preferred of about 58°C, in the presence of starch degrading enzymes, such as α -amylase, β -amylase,
25 amyloglucosidase and pullulanase, and, optionally, protein degrading enzymes;
- cooling to a temperature below 50°C, preferably to about 40°C,
- removing insoluble material to form a wort;
- 30 - optionally, extracting the insoluble material with water and adding the extract to the wort;
- transferring the wort to a boiling tank, optionally to a storage tank before transferring it to said boiling tank;

- boiling the wort with hops according to taste at conditions sufficient to destroy all enzymatic activity, thereby forming a boiled wort;
- cooling the boiled wort to room temperature or lower,
5 preferably to a temperature of about 10°C;
- optionally, adding a conventional malt wort boiled with hops to the boiled wort prior to or subsequent to cooling;
- adding a yeast culture;
- fermenting the mixture to produce a cereal beer having a
10 high content of soluble β -glucan.

By stopping the process of the invention at an appropriate stage a wort, boiled with hops or not, can be produced.

- 15 This process for producing a wort having a high content of soluble β -glucan is also comprised by the invention.

A variation of the method according to the invention comprises adding a boiled conventional malt wort to the wort of the
20 invention prior to boiling or adding the wort of the invention to a conventional boiled malt wort in the process of producing a beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan. By stopping this variant process according to the invention at an appropriate stage a mixed wort comprising the wort of the
25 invention, boiled with hops or not, and a conventional boiled wort, can be produced. This process for producing such a 'mixed' wort having a high content of soluble β -glucan is also comprised by the invention.

- 30 The use of an oats flour and/or barley flour fraction rich in β -glucan or a mixture thereof is preferred. Particularly preferred is the use of such an oats flour fraction.

The process of the invention conserves most of soluble β -glucan found in the cereal, such as more than 50% thereof, since the enzymes used for the degradation of starch are essentially free from β -glucanase activity and since mainly
5 the insoluble fibers are removed during the process. This leaves the β -glucan soluble dietary fibers in the wort. In traditional brewing SDF are degraded by the β -glucanase activity developing during malting.

10 In the process of the invention the added enzyme(s) degrade starch and proteins to small fermentable molecules. Starch degradation predominantly yields maltose and glucose, as well as small amounts of maltotriose. Protein degradation yields small peptides and amino acids. β -Amylase in combination with
15 amyloglucosidase or α -amylase produces maltose and glucose. β -Amylase in combination with pullulanase produces maltose. A combination of β -amylase, pullulanase, and amyloglucosidase produces glucose. α -Amylase in combination with amyloglucosidase produces large amounts of glucose. Any combination of
20 these enzymes that yields a fermentable wort with essentially intact SDF can be used. The enzymes or part thereof need not be added as such but can be provided in form of cereal derived raw material containing them, including non-malted barley, barley or oats malted in a way so as to conserve certain
25 enzyme activity, and conventional heat treated malt wort.

A particularly preferred process according to the invention for the production of a beer rich in soluble β -glucan, comprises the following steps:

- 30 - forming an aqueous oats slurry containing from 15% to 25% by weight of wet milled rolled oats, heat treated oats flour or incompletely germinated oats;

WO 00/24864

7

PCT/SE99/01914

- mashing the slurry at a temperature of about 58°C, in the presence of added one or several of β -amylase, amyloglucosidase, α -amylase, pullulanase, protease;
- cooling to a temperature below 50°C;
- 5 - removing solids to form a wort rich in soluble β -glucan;
- optionally, extracting the solid residue with water and adding the extract to the oats wort;
- transferring the oats wort to a boiling tank;
- boiling the oats wort with hops according to taste;
- 10 - cooling the boiled oats wort to room temperature or lower, preferably to a temperature of about 10°C;
- optionally, adding conventional malt wort boiled with hops before or after the boiling step;
- adding a yeast culture;
- 15 - fermenting the mixture to produce an oats beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan.

The process of the invention can be directly integrated into conventional brewing processes. The only equipment required in
20 addition to that usually found on site is a device for the milling of barley and rolled oats if rolled oats is used instead of an oats flour fraction, a heat exchanger and a decanter centrifuge or similar separation equipment. Tanks are usually abundant at any brewery.

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According to the present invention is also disclosed a cereal beer containing a high amount of soluble β -glucan, including a beer made from a combination of the wort according to the invention and a traditional malted wort produced from other
30 raw materials, such as a mixed wort containing more than 30%, preferably more than 50% of the wort according to the invention. A cereal beer of the invention produced solely from rolled oats or an oats flour fraction contains more than 0.3%

by weight of soluble β -glucan, preferably more than 0.5%, and even more than 0.6%. A cereal beer made from a combination of worts contains at least a corresponding amount of soluble β -glucan, that is, an amount which is about proportional to the
5 volume-% of the beer derived from oats wort; preferred is an amount of more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan.

According to the present invention is also disclosed an oats wort containing more than 0.3% by weight of soluble β -glucan,
10 preferably more than 0.5%, and even more than 0.6%. Also disclosed is a mixed wort containing at least an amount of soluble β -glucan corresponding to the proportion of the oats wort in the mixed wort; preferred is an amount of more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan.

15 The person skilled in the art will understand that, instead of oats alone or oats in combination with barley or barley alone, any suitable other cereal or mixture of cereals can be employed, such as maize, sorghum, rice, wheat, rye, and
20 potato, the process of the invention being adapted to the requirements of the particular cereal or mixture of cereals used.

Where appropriate, 'cereal(s)' includes material(s) derived
25 from a cereal or mixture of cereals. 'Effective amount' of a carbohydrate degrading enzyme is an amount sufficient to degrade at least 0.1 % of the glycosidic bonds of the starch contained in the starting material. 'Final product' refers to any product obtained in the process of the invention, such as
30 a non-boiled oats wort; a final product can be stored for a shorter or longer time prior to being further treated. For a general background of brewing technology reference is made to T. O'Rourke: Brewing. Industrial Enzymology, 2nd Edition, p. 105-131, including further literature cited therein.

Further advantages of the invention are disclosed in the claims and will also be evident from a number of preferred but not limiting embodiments of the invention.

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DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Materials. A commercial heat-treated oats flour fraction high in β -glucan, 'HAVREMJÖL C45', was obtained from Skåne-möller (Tågarp, Sweden). Oats flour fractions high in β -glucan can be also be obtained by applying the teaching of US 5,063,078 (Frohse) to oats. Rolled oats is commercially available from Vårgårda (Sweden), Skåne-möller, and other sources. β -Amylase (barley) was obtained from Genencor International, Inc. (Rochester, NY, USA) and Rhodia Ltd. (Cheshire, UK). Pullulanase and α -amylase was obtained from Genencor or Novo Nordisk Nordisk, (Valby, Denmark). Amyloglucosidase was obtained from Novo Nordisk. Suitable proteases can be obtained from a variety of manufacturers.

20

Example 1. Preparation of oats wort and oats beer from rolled oats. Rolled oats are wet milled at a temperature of about 62° to yield a slurry which is transferred to a double mantled (for heating) stainless steel reaction tank provided with efficient stirring equipment. The proportion of oats to water can be varied within a wide range. For most applications a proportion of from about 15% w/v to about 25% w/v is appropriate. A combination of enzymes is employed which imitates the malting process used at the respective brewery. For instance, β -amylase is added at a dosage of from 10,000 to 22,000 Dp° per kg of oats, preferably of about 18,000 Dp° per kg of oats to initiate the degradation of starch to maltose. Pullulanase and/or amyloglucosidase is added to the slurry, each enzyme preparation at a dosage of 300-1,200 enzyme units

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per kg of oats to improve the fermentability of the wort. The temperature is lowered to about 57°C, and α -amylase is added at a dosage of from about 800 to about 5,000 amylase units per kg of oats, optimally of about 2,500 units per kg. After one
5 hour's reaction the refractometer reading should be from about 6% to about 10%, preferably at least 8%, due to the production of maltose and glucose. Stirring of the slurry continues until a highly fermentable wort of about 12%, preferably of about 14% is obtained. Addition of iodine to a wort sample
10 demonstrates that essentially all starch has been consumed. Protease is added at a dosage of 3-12 protease units per kg of oats to further increase fermentability of the wort by producing amino acids and low molecular weight peptides later to be consumed for yeast growth. A reaction period of about 30
15 min will usually be sufficient for the action of protease. Stirring is stopped and the solids are left to settle in the reaction tank while the wort is emptied from its top and cooled to 40°C in a heat exchanger. The solids are continuously removed by a decanter centrifuge. To provide for
20 quantitative extraction of SDF water (1 liter/kg of oats) is added to the residue remaining in the reaction tank. The slurry is stirred and pumped through the decanter into the boiling tank. The thus prepared oats wort is boiled with hops, for example 2 g - 5 g of hops per kg of oats, for about 70
25 min. The boiled wort is cooled to 10°C, and yeast is added. The same procedure has been employed for producing a boiled barley wort from a corresponding amount of rolled barley.

Optionally the oats or barley wort thus obtained (boiled or
30 not boiled) is mixed with a traditional barley malt wort (boiled with hops), for instance with an equal volume thereof. A typical beer prepared with equal amounts of oat wort according to the invention and traditional barley malt wort (lager) contains 4.8% by volume of alcohol, has a color of at

least 8.0 EBC, a pH value of 5.0 and a bitterness of about 13-14 EBU. The sugar content of the mixed wort was about 1.2%. The β -glucan content of the oats wort was 0.62%.

5 **Example 2. Preparation of oats wort and oats beer from an oats flour fraction.** A heat treated oats flour fraction (Skåne-möllan) is used instead of the rolled oats of Example 1. The oats flour fraction is suspended in water in a concentration of about 20-30 % w/v at a temperature of 58-65°C. For the rest
10 the process of Example 1 is followed.

The same procedure is applicable to the preparation of cereal wort or beer according to the invention from cereal flour, in particular barley flour.

15 **Example 3. Preparation of a ready-to-use enzyme enriched oats flour composition.** The enzymes of Example 1 are thoroughly mixed in a double cone blender with a corresponding amount of an oats flour fraction high in β -glucan. The water content of the preparation should be the same or lower than that of
20 commercial air dry oats flour to assure good storing properties. Addition of warm water restores enzyme activity. Other cereal flour than oats flour may be used, for instance barley flour, to obtain a corresponding enzyme enriched cereal flour composition.

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Example 4. Preparation of a mixed oats/barley wort in the absence of added enzymes. Heat treated oats flour (Skåne-möllan) and/or mildly malted and optionally heat treated oats, and milled or crushed barley (barley grits) malted under mild
30 conditions (about 10% or more of total solids) are mixed in a tank. The barley malt supplies β -amylase activity (approximately 50-80 DP°/g). Its malting conditions were selected to avoid production of β -glucanase activity. This can be achieved by either using short malting times or selective

β -glucanase inactivation by heat treating the malt. In a second tank conventional malting of barley takes place.

The malt extract, that is, the liquid phase from the barley
5 malting tank, contains a variety of enzymes among which
 β -glucanase is detrimental for the desired product. Therefore
it is heat treated by means of a heat exchanger to ensure
inactivation of β -glucanase prior to adding it to the barley/
oats malt slurry tank. β -glucanase is less stable to heat than
10 α -amylase. The partial loss of β -amylase during the heat
treatment can be compensated for by adding the aforementioned
milled (crushed) and specially malted barley to the oats.
Otherwise the process is carried out as in Example 1 and with
corresponding amounts of raw materials and additives.

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C l a i m s

1. A process for the production of a cereal wort or beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan from a cereal or mixture of cereals in which a cereal employed in the process essentially lacks β -glucanase activity and never comprised such activity, said soluble β -glucan being comprised by said cereal.
2. The process of claim 1 for the production of a cereal beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan from a cereal or mixture of cereals comprising the following steps:
- forming an aqueous cereal slurry containing from 10% to 30% by weight of at least one a wet or dry milled cereal which essentially lacks β -glucanase activity;
 - mashing the slurry at a temperature above 50°C in the presence of at least one starch degrading enzyme and, optionally, at least one protein degrading enzyme;
 - cooling to a temperature below 50°C,
 - removing insoluble material to form a wort;
 - boiling the wort with hops at conditions sufficient to destroy all enzymatic activity, thereby forming a boiled wort;
 - cooling the boiled wort to room temperature or lower;
 - adding yeast to the boiled wort;
 - fermenting the mixture to produce a cereal beer having a high content of soluble β -glucan.
3. The process of claim 2, including the step of combining boiled malt wort with said cereal wort prior to boiling.
4. The process of claim 2, wherein the cereal is a malted cereal selected from oats, barley and a mixture thereof, the

29-12-2000

The Swedish Patent Office
PCT International Application

2

cereal having been heat treated to destroy essentially prevent the development of all glucanase activity.

5. The process of claim 2, wherein the cereal is a malted
5 cereal selected from oats, barley and a mixture thereof, the cereal having been heat treated to destroy essentially prevent the development of all β -glucanase activity.

6. The process of claim 2, including the step of heat
10 treating the cereal sufficiently to inactivate it so as to essentially prevent the development of all β -glucanase activity contained therein.

7. The process of claim 2, wherein the mashing temperature is
15 from 54 to 65°C.

8. The process of claim 2, wherein the process conditions are controlled such that more than 50% of soluble β -glucan
20 comprised by the cereal is preserved in the final product.

9. The process of claim 2, wherein the starch degrading enzyme is amylase, optionally in combination with pullulanase or amyloglucosidase or both.

25 10. A cereal wort or beer containing more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan, said wort or beer having been produced from a cereal or mixture of cereals in which a cereal employed in the process essentially lacks β -glucanase activity and never comprised such activity, said soluble β -glucan being
30 comprised by said cereal.

11. The cereal wort or beer of claim 10, containing more than 0.3% of soluble β -glucan.

12. The cereal wort or beer of claim 10, containing more than 0.5% of soluble β -glucan.
13. The cereal wort or beer of claim 10, wherein the cereal is
5 at least one member selected from the group consisting of wet milled rolled oats, wet milled rolled barley, wet milled crushed barley, incompletely germinated oats, incompletely germinated barley, heat treated oats flour, heat treated barley flour.
- 10 14. The cereal wort or beer of claim 10, wherein said cereal is oats, barley or a mixture thereof.
- 15 15. A cereal beer product comprising the combination of the wort of claim 14 and another wort in which the wort of claim 14 is more than 30% by volume.
- 16 16. The cereal beer product of claim 15, containing more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan.
- 20 17. The cereal beer product of claim 15, containing more than 0.3% by weight of soluble β -glucan.
- 25 18. A cereal wort or beer containing more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan from incompletely germinated oats material which lacks β -glucanase activity and never comprised such activity, said soluble β -glucan being comprised by said cereal.
- 30 19. The cereal beer of claim 18 made exclusively from barley, malts and hops, and containing more than 0.2% by weight of soluble β -glucan.

29 -12- 2000

4

20. A partially germinated cereal grain having amylolytic activity while essentially lacking β -glucanase activity.

21. The grain of claim 20 in which the cereal is barley or
5 oats or a mixture thereof.

AMENDED SHEET